

2002

Appleby Archaeology Group

The first event of 2002 for the Appleby Archaeology Group was the annual general meeting which was held on January 15th and was followed by a talk by Liz Hawkins, a member of the group, on the Carlisle Records Office.

Liz Hawkins began by saying that the Carlisle Records Office was one of four in the County, they are repositories for hand written documents. She emphasised that with manuscripts there was only one and that great care had to be taken when they are consulted and the advice from the records officer must be followed. Some of the problems are that manuscripts may be on thin paper which crumbles, or on thick paper, not unlike blotting paper, which is easily marked and indented. Parchment is much stronger but it dries out and the ink on the surface flakes off. Photocopying is very destructive to parchment

The Carlisle records are housed at the castle and there are three main collections, the Diocesan, the Dean and Chapter's and the Lowther collections. She gave a brief description of the first two and advised the group that the Lowther collection, which is vast, is available to anyone undertaking personal research.

The Diocesan collection contains faculties from 1700. Permits from the faculty office are required for any changes made to churches such as the of moving of pews, or alterations to the church yards. An example was shown of the faculty which granted the Earl of Thanet permission to demolish a church on Stainmore and rebuild it at his expense. Probate was granted by the Ecclesiastical Court from 1540-1857 excluding the years of the Civil War and wills form part of

this collection. It was interesting to learn that the term real estate appears in the early records! A number of wills were available to study. Liz then explained that "Peculiars" in the context of probate records referred to those of manors, usually owned by the church, that had the power to grant probate and that there were two such manors in this area Ravenstonedale and Temple Sowerby.

The collection of the Dean and Chapter consist of papers produced by them such as the records of tenancies of the manors they owned and of the records acquired by them. They are the Bishop's Registers and the Machell Papers.

The Bishop's Registers include three from the medieval period. The register of the Bishop of Carlisle 1353- 1362 has been transcribed and published and a copy of the book was available to look at. Thomas Machell was the incumbent of Kirby Thore from 1670-90. He was a respected antiquarian who collected a large number and variety of documents, maps, plans and drawings which are well indexed in a published volume. Copies of some papers were available for the group to look at.

Those present had time to study the documents, many of them relating to the Appleby area and ask questions before thanking Liz for an interesting and informative talk.

The next meeting of the group will be on Tuesday March 5that 7pm in the Intake Centre Appleby Grammar School when Niall Munro will talk on The Medieval Defences of the Eden Valley.

Phyllis H Rouston January 19, 2002